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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT.

Wednesday, September 15, 1933
U. S. Department of Agriculture

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "Economy in Garden Vegetables." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics and the Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. D. A.

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If you're really interested in economy, if you're really a believer in thrift and household savings, you'll be interested in all the facts the scientists have learned in recent years about making the most of fresh garden vegetables.

As we've mentioned before, they've discovered many things about cooking vegetables. Time was when most women boiled their vegetables to death. Time was when most of us took it for granted that cooked vegetables would be poor in flavor and very unattractive in appearance. Time was when none of us thought about cooking to save food value. We'd never even heard of those healthful vitamins and minerals.

Fortunately times have changed. Nowadays most of us believe in cooking vegetables to save looks, flavor, and food value. Most of us know that fresh vegetables need to be cooked until just tender -- no longer; and we know that we save food value by using the smallest possible amount of boiling salted water when we boil our vegetables; and we know that leaving the lid off the kettle helps in saving the color in green vegetables. If we're up-to-date at all, we're on to little facts like these, thanks to the foods specialists.

What's more, most of us believe in eating plenty of raw fresh vegetables. We serve them in salads, in appetizers and relishes and so on. We know that when we eat vegetables raw we get all the food value. Even the children like sandwiches filled with chopped raw carrots or cabbage or lettuce or celery for their school lunches.

And nowadays we housewives know the value of variety in vegetables -- or rather variety in the preparation of vegetables. Nothing ruins the popularity of a food like monotony. Monotony will in time spoil your family's appetite for almost any dish you can mention. Take stewed tomatoes. There's a popular vegetable dish the country over. But try serving stewed tomatoes at your house once or twice a day, and see how soon the family will say thumbs down on tomatoes. But you can serve tomatoes twice a day with no monotony if you serve them in different ways. For example, at noon you can serve them raw in salad, at night baked and served with the meat, the next day fried, the next in soup and so on. The chances are that your family will never tire of tomatoes on such a schedule. The more different and delicious ways you know to fix each different vegetable as it comes in season, the better prepared you are to make the most of the vegetables in your garden or in the market. That recipe file on your kitchen shelf -- does it hold plenty of vegetable recipes? Look under "Tomatoes," for example. How many good tomato recipes do you find? Have you recipes for tomatoes baked, broiled, fried, and stuffed? Have you recipes for combinations like tomatoes and celery stewed together, tomatoes and onions, or tomatoes, corn and cheese on toast?

Have you good recipes for catsup, chili sauce, and relish, in case you want to put up surplus tomatoes for winter? And have you plenty of green tomato recipes, so that you can use up the green tomatoes before Jack Frost gets them this fall -- green tomato pie, green tomato soup, green tomato pickles, and so on?

Now look in your recipe file for "Corn." Have you recipes for corn chowder, corn fritters, corn pudding, corn rabbit, corn soup, and corn relish? These are some of the good ways to use your garden corn or the corn you dried or canned for the winter?

And how about fresh bean recipes -- snap beans and lima beans? Have you recipes on hand for quick cooked snap beans, scalloped snap beans, shredded beans and pork? Have you that good recipe for lima beans in tomato sauce?

So much for variety and your recipe file. Still another point about making the most of your garden vegetables is to use them fresh. Did you ever notice that corn which has stood around in the market or the kitchen lacks the fine sweet flavor of corn, cooked fresh from the garden? Did you ever notice the same thing about peas, lima beans, and snap beans? As you might expect, the reason is that the freshly picked vegetables contain more sugar than those that have stood some time in a warm place. The question then arises: "How can you conserve this sugar?"

Answer: Either by cooking and eating the vegetables promptly after picking or by keeping them in the refrigerator until you use them. Experiments show that this loss of sugar is much greater at high temperatures. Sweet corn, peas, or any fresh vegetables are living organisms. The sugar in these sweet fresh vegetables changes to starch at high temperatures, as we've mentioned before. Peas or sweet corn can actually lose half their sugar on standing twenty-four hours in a temperature of 85 degrees Fahrenheit, while at 32 degrees they only lose a small amount of sugar in two weeks.

For best flavor in your garden peas, corn, and beans, use them soon after bringing in from the garden, or else cool the vegetables quickly and keep in the refrigerator until you cook them. As we said yesterday, this is most important also in canning these vegetables, not only because of the sugar content but because flat sour -- a very common cause of spoilage -- is likely to develop in these vegetables if they stand in a warm place.

The menu for today features garden vegetables: Baked green peppers filled with sweet corn; Baked sweet potatoes; Broiled tomatoes on toast; and, for dessert, Grape pie.

TOMORROW: "Questions."

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